

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
DECISION
Marvin Bagley Conservation Easement Acquisition
DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2016-0003-DNA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI): I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment and FONSI/DR for the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, EA# ID-310-2006-EA-3398 (2008), including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts, and reviewed and thoroughly considered public comments regarding the EA. I have also reviewed the ten Intensity Factors for significance listed in 40 CFR 1508.27 and have determined that the proposed action to acquire a conservation easement does not constitute a major federal action affecting the quality of the human environment or causing unnecessary or undue degradation of the natural environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement has not been prepared. Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Determination of NEPA Adequacy and as analyzed in the Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision EA, I have determined that the action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

DECISION: It is my decision to acquire a conservation easements on approximately 160 acres of private property located along the Henry's Fork of the Snake River in Madison County, Idaho as described in the Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2016-0003-DNA.

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT: The proposed action is to acquire a conservation easement on an approximately 160 acres of pasture lands, cultivated fields, and riparian along the Henry's Fork of the Snake River in Madison County within the Snake River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). It lies approximately eight miles north of Rexburg in Madison County, Idaho. The acquisition of the conservation easement is pending Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) appropriations for the Upper Snake/South Fork Snake River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) project.

The Bagley property offers approximately a half mile of river frontage, borders BLM on the South and East boundary. The main body (approximately 110 acres) of the property includes the riparian and pasture lands. The most northern portion (approximately 50 acres) of the property is cultivated in grain. They would want to retain the right to farm. All reserved areas, to be determined, would be included therein and are subject to the Conservation Easements terms and conditions. A county road runs along the north side, of the property boundaries.

The property has Henry's Fork River frontage and wetlands associated with the river. Wetland vegetation provides habitat to a number of wildlife species that are designated by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game as "species of greatest conservation need." Special status species that are likely to use the property include: Sandhill Crane, Trumpeter Swan, Northern Pintail, Hooded Merganser, American White Pelican, White-faced Ibis, California Gull, Franklin's Gull,

Black-crowned Night-Heron, Bald Eagle and Swainson's Hawk. This landscape provides connectivity for wildlife moving along the river corridor.

This property is a private inholding within the Snake River ACEC, the area supports a variety of vegetative communities including cottonwoods, willow, water birch and other wetland vegetation, sagebrush steppe, and cultivated fields. Protection of the property would provide open space and uninterrupted scenic views to members of the public floating/fishing along the Henry's Fork.

Acquisition of a conservation easement on the Bagley property meets BLM's management goals of maintaining open space, protecting crucial wildlife habitat, and promoting outdoor recreation opportunities and access along the Henry's Fork.

RATIONALE: The proposed action to acquire the conservation easement is in conformance with the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement approved in 1985. Although not specifically provided for, the proposed action is in conformance with the Medicine Lodge RMP Management Area 9 (Snake River) decision (#10) to create the Snake River ACEC and develop an associated management plan for the purpose of protecting the unique natural resources that the river system provides.

This project is not unique or unusual, and the Upper Snake Field Office has implemented similar actions in the past. The environmental effects to the human environment were analyzed in the Snake River Activity and Operations Plan Revision approved in 2008. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The historic and cultural resources of the area have been inventoried and there are no potential impacts to the resources. No threatened or endangered plants or animals or critical habitat are known to occur in the area

The DNA notice was posted on the BLM website in November 12, 2015.

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES: Refer to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 4 for appeals information.

Authorized Officer: /s/ Jeremy Casterson Date: 11/12/2015